UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1995/179
8 March 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 3 MARCH 1995 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I should like to refer to paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 968 (1994) and to the letter to me from the President of the Council dated 6 February 1995 (S/1995/109) by which the Council endorsed my recommendation concerning the continuation of UNMOT's presence in Tajikistan until 6 March 1995.

In order to keep the peace process on track, I asked Under-Secretary-General Aldo Ajello to undertake consultations with officials of the Russian Federation, the Government of Tajikistan and the Tajik opposition with a view to resolving the issues of the venue, date and agenda for the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks and to obtaining agreement to the extension of the cease-fire agreement. He began his consultations in Moscow from 24 to 27 February, in Dushanbe from 28 February to 1 March and in Islamabad from 2 to 4 March.

As a result of his negotiations thus far, Mr. Ajello has been able to achieve agreement on the extension of the cease-fire agreement until 26 April 1995. I have asked him to continue his current mission in an effort to resolve the remaining difficulties in arranging the fourth round of talks. I will revert to the Council at the conclusion of Mr. Ajello's mission.

In view, however, of the agreement of the parties to continue the cease-fire, I recommend now that UNMOT's presence in Tajikistan be continued until 26 April 1995, on the basis of the mandate contained in resolution 968 (1994).

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

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LETTER DATED 6 MARCH 1995 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 3 March 1995 (S/1995/179) concerning the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) has been brought to the attention of the members of the Council.

The members of the Council endorse your recommendation, in view of the agreement of the parties to continue the cease-fire, that UNMOT'S presence in Tajikistan be continued until 26 April 1995. Reaffirming Security Council resolution 968 (1994), the members of the Council urge the parties in the interim to resolve the remaining difficulties in arranging the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks aimed at reaching a political settlement to the conflict.

The members of the Council welcome your intention to revert to the Council at the conclusion of Under-Secretary-General Aldo Ajello's mission and will be looking forward to a report at that time.

(Signed) LI Zhaoxing
President of the Security Council

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S/1995/181
6 March 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN ABKHAZIA, GEORGIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 971 (1995) of 12 January 1995, by which the Council requested me "to report within two months ... on all aspects of the situation in Abkhazia, Republic of Georgia".

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. Further to my report of 6 January 1995 (S/1995/10) and following personal contacts with the two sides to the conflict, my Special Envoy for Georgia convened a further round of negotiations in Geneva from 7 to 9 February 1995 with the objective of making progress towards a comprehensive settlement. The negotiations were also attended by representatives of the Russian Federation as facilitator, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The negotiations revolved mainly around political matters and refugee issues.

3. At the start of the meeting, UNHCR reported that only 311 refugees had returned under UNHCR procedures, owing largely to Abkhaz unwillingness but also to the deteriorating security situation in the Gali region. UNHCR said that its financial situation was alarming. If no further contributions were forthcoming, it could maintain its operation in Georgia only until late March. Nevertheless, despite strong efforts by my Special Envoy, UNHCR, the Russian Federation and OSCE, the Abkhaz authorities were unwilling to agree to a timetable for the speedier return of refugees and displaced persons. They maintained their position that progress on the question of refugees must be linked to progress on political issues.

4. Negotiations on the question of the political status of Abkhazia were conducted on the basis of the political paper that had been circulated to both sides at the previous round of negotiations, held in November 1994 in Geneva. In the course of businesslike and constructive talks, both sides reached, for the first time, an understanding on certain provisions of a future agreement concerning a State within the boundaries of the former Georgian Soviet Socialist

Republic as at 21 December 1991, including the establishment of a "federal legislative organ" and a "supreme organ of executive power", acting within the bounds of agreed competences.

5. In order not to lose momentum, my Special Envoy promptly convened an expert group meeting, which took place from 15 to 17 February in Moscow, and held a second session, also in Moscow, from 1 to 3 March. To some extent, the discussions achieved further progress on formulations for basic provisions of an agreement on a political settlement of the Georgian/Abkhaz conflict. However, core areas of disagreement remain. They include (a) recognition of the territorial integrity of Georgia, (b) characterization of the union State as federal in nature, (c) the issue of a joint army and (d) popular legitimization of an agreement.

6. A further meeting of the expert group will be held in the latter part of March.

7. My Special Envoy visited United Nations Headquarters for consultations on 2 and 3 March and briefed the Security Council at its informal consultations on 3 March.

8. He intends to convene a further round of negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in early April in Moscow.

III. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

9. As stated in paragraph 3 above, organized repatriation of refugees remains at a standstill. None the less, UNHCR has maintained a presence in Georgia, including Abkhazia, where it has monitored the security situation in the Gali region so as to determine when conditions conducive to the safe and orderly return of refugees are present and to monitor the situation of the 311 returnees. UNHCR has also been monitoring the security situation of the refugees and internally displaced persons in the Zugdidi region.

10. UNHCR has observed that, despite the presence of the peace-keeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), conditions in the security zone have deteriorated to the point where it has become increasingly difficult to deliver relief supplies to target groups without their being looted and without placing the intended beneficiaries at risk. Furthermore, UNHCR's implementing partners are reluctant to operate in these areas.

11. Following the talks in Geneva from 7 to 9 February 1995, the Government of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities agreed to consider a pragmatic timetable for the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons into Abkhazia, and to adopt stringent measures to restore acceptable security conditions in the areas of return. Shortly after these talks, and for the first time in two months, the Quadripartite Commission met in Moscow on 16 February 1995. However, in spite of flexibility on the part of UNHCR, the Abkhaz side was unwilling to accept returnees in any significant numbers and the Commission was therefore unable to make progress towards a repatriation plan.

12. The funding situation of UNHCR's programmes in Georgia continues to be critical and has now compelled UNHCR to reduce its presence in the country. Relief items purchased and donated in 1994 are still stored in Sochi and remain available for the assistance of a limited number of returnees. An inter-agency appeal covering, inter alia, the UNHCR assistance programme to refugees and displaced persons in Georgia, including Abkhazia, is in preparation and should be launched around the end of March 1995. The implementation of this programme will depend on the availability of funds and the existence of conditions allowing free access to the beneficiaries.

13. Council members will recall from my report of 6 January 1995 (S/1995/10, para. 14) that, in preparation for the appeal mentioned in paragraph 12 above, an inter-agency assessment mission to the Caucasus, headed by a representative of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, evaluated the needs of Georgia and the other countries in the region for the coming year. The mission took particular note of the fact that the severe energy situation in Georgia affects the agricultural and industrial sectors negatively and that the consequences are felt especially by the most vulnerable population groups - the internally displaced persons, women, children and the elderly.

14. Despite these constraints and adverse conditions, UNHCR remains committed to the quadripartite process of voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons to Abkhazia.

15. As I mentioned in my report of 6 January 1995 (S/1995/10, para. 15), the voluntary fund referred to in paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 937 (1994) has been established and I have appealed to Member States to contribute to that fund. Only one pledge, by the Government of Israel, has been made.

IV. OPERATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA

16. UNOMIG has continued to fulfil the tasks mandated by the Security Council in resolution 937 (1994) of 21 July 1994. It has been operating in the security and restricted weapons zones and in the Kodori valley according to the concept of operations described in my report of 12 July 1994 (S/1994/818). UNOMIG has also monitored the weapons storage sites of both the Government of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities.

17. UNOMIG continues to be under the command of the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General John Hvidegaard (Denmark). The Mission maintains its full authorized strength of 136 military observers. A table showing its composition is annexed to the present report. As mentioned in my report of 14 October 1994 (S/1994/1160, para. 11), the Mission has its headquarters in Sukhumi, with part of the headquarters staff located in Pitsunda and a liaison office in Tbilisi. It has three sector headquarters - at Sukhumi, Gali and Zugdidi. The Gali sector, where most of the refugees are expected to return, has the largest number of military observers.

18. UNOMIG has established two team site bases at Otobaya and Ingurges, in the Gali region (see attached map). The Ingurges area includes a hydro-power plant

that is of strategic importance to both the Government of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities. The Otobaya area includes the area to which most of the refugees are expected to return. Daily 24-hour patrols are conducted throughout these areas, as well as at the Gali Canal.

19. As Council members are aware, neither UNOMIG's mandate nor its strength enables it to prevent violations of the agreement on a cease-fire and separation of forces of 14 May 1994 (see S/1994/583, annex) or to deter armed groups from entering the security zone. However, UNOMIG's protests, together with the action taken by the CIS peace-keeping force, help to reduce the number and duration of such violations. UNOMIG has also received confirmation from the local population that its permanent presence or frequent patrolling in areas of high criminality have a certain deterrent effect and instil a sense of safety in the population. As a result, UNOMIG continuously adjusts its patrolling, giving priority to areas of concern.

20. Cooperation between UNOMIG and the Government of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities continues to be satisfactory. UNOMIG also continues to enjoy the freedom of movement necessary to perform its task. The attitude of the local population towards it has been generally positive, although there have been a few isolated incidents where observers have been threatened by radical elements from both sides. However, the Chief Military Observer believes that no direct threat exists to the Mission's personnel.

21. As I mentioned in my report of 6 January 1995 (S/1995/10, para. 22), the establishment of UNOMIG's liaison office in Tbilisi has contributed to the strengthening of cooperation between the Mission and the OSCE representatives, with senior staff briefing each other on their activities.

V. SITUATION ON THE GROUND

A. General

22. In general, the situation has been tense, except in the Kodori valley where it has been calm. In spite of the positive effect of the CIS peace-keeping force's presence and UNOMIG's extensive patrolling of certain areas, the crime rate throughout the Mission's area of operation, especially in Abkhazia, remains high. Incidents of violations of human rights, largely against the Georgian population, have been reported. UNOMIG believes that armed elements, beyond the control of either the Government of Georgia or the Abkhaz authorities, have been responsible for these acts. Further, attempts to reintroduce heavy military equipment and armament into the security and restricted weapons zones have been made by both sides. UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force have protested all such attempts.

23. Since mid-January the number of ambushes in the Gali region has increased. These incidents have caused 23 casualties, most of them among the Abkhaz population, and have claimed the life of 1 CIS soldier. In addition, 6 persons, including 4 CIS soldiers, have been killed in mine accidents and 15 others have been killed or wounded in other incidents. Since my last report, it has been possible to cross the Inguri river in both directions and up to 200 persons have

done so daily. It is UNOMIG's assessment, however, that the number of people now leaving Abkhazia for safer areas exceeds that of people returning to the region.

24. In paragraph 7 of resolution 971 (1995) the Security Council requested me "to examine, within UNOMIG's existing mandate, in cooperation with the relevant representatives of the CIS peace-keeping force, the possibility of additional steps to contribute to conditions conducive to the safe and orderly return of refugees and displaced persons". The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG has developed a plan to establish additional team site bases in the security and restricted weapons zones, thus expanding the area where UNOMIG conducts daily 24-hour patrols. The Commander of the CIS peace-keeping force has indicated that he intends to increase the number of checkpoints along the Inguri river, thus allowing a larger number of refugees to cross into Abkhazia. In an effort to improve the security situation in the area, the Commander of the force has recently imposed a curfew in the Gali region between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

B. Security and weapons restricted zones

25. On the east bank of the Inguri river, the Georgian armed forces have attempted to re-enter the security zone and uncontrolled armed elements have clashed with the local police, have crossed the river with arms and, under the pretence of being refugees, have been conducting patrols along the river bank. Further, there are indications that a military formation still operates in the Zugdidi region, although it was formally disbanded by the Government of Georgia on 30 September 1994. UNOMIG believes that this formation has been responsible for some of the ambushes in the Gali region.

26. On the west bank of the river, attempts to reintroduce heavy military equipment into the restricted weapons zone continue to be made, but such equipment is withdrawn upon protest from UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force. Criminal elements of Georgian and Abkhaz origin also operate in the Gali region. Further, armed elements claiming to belong to the militia operate in the security zone, but these elements are either unable to produce supporting documentation or produce documents authorizing them to operate in a different area. UNOMIG believes that these elements have been responsible for most of the criminal incidents and that they are not operating upon instructions from the Abkhaz authorities. The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG has drawn the Abkhaz authorities' attention to these militia and the authorities have promised to take serious measures against them.

27. Local authorities in the towns of Zugdidi and Gali have been cooperating in a number of practical matters, such as repair of power- and water-supply facilities, and are at present negotiating the possibility of establishing telephone lines between the two towns.

28. The difference in the levels of armament between the Georgian police and the Abkhaz militia, to which I referred in my report of 6 January 1995 (S/1995/10, para. 26), still exists. This issue, however, has not been raised by either side during the reporting period.

C. Kodori valley

29. UNOMIG has been able to resume its patrolling of the Kodori valley. However, because of rain and poor road conditions, this activity is limited to a weekly three-day patrol. The CIS peace-keeping force maintains a permanent post in Lata and a checkpoint 10 kilometres east of the post. It has withdrawn from Azhara, but continues to patrol the area and throughout the valley. The Svans and the Abkhaz also maintain separate checkpoints east of Lata.

30. The relations on the ground between the Abkhaz and the Svans continue to be satisfactory. They have regular meetings and are currently negotiating the exchange of some prisoners.

VI. COOPERATION BETWEEN UNOMIG AND THE CIS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE

31. In paragraph 6 (b) of resolution 937 (1994) the Security Council entrusted UNOMIG with the observation of the operation of the CIS peace-keeping force within the framework of the implementation of the agreement of 14 May 1994. UNOMIG has reported that the CIS peace-keeping force has been conducting its operations accordingly and any variation from the tasks stipulated in the agreement has been made in consultation with the parties.

32. In accordance with the agreement of 14 May 1994, the CIS peace-keeping force is deployed on both sides of the security zone and, as agreed by the parties, in the Kodori valley. It has been patrolling these areas, on a 24-hour basis, either jointly with UNOMIG or on its own.

33. Cooperation between UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force proceeds along the lines described in my report of 12 July 1994 (S/1994/818). Exchanges of information, mutual assistance and joint patrolling are taking place regularly and the cooperation continues to be satisfactory.

34. UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force continue to coordinate the execution of their respective mandates. The Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG and the Commander of the CIS peace-keeping force meet once or twice a week to exchange views and information regarding the prevailing situation and to coordinate their operations. Their principal subordinates meet almost daily for the same purpose. Further, UNOMIG team site bases and patrols have several contacts daily with the CIS peace-keeping force's posts and patrols.

VII. OBSERVATIONS

35. I stated in my previous report (S/1995/10) that political negotiations were at a standstill. This is no longer the case in that there has now been some movement, albeit not extensive. For the first time there has been a productive dialogue between the two sides; negotiations and expert discussions have been constructive and businesslike and a certain substantive momentum has been tentatively established. My Special Envoy is determined to do all that he can to maintain this momentum with the help of the Russian Federation and the active participation of OSCE. Common language has been found on some of the many

issues related to the identification of a political status for Abkhazia acceptable to both sides. There can be little doubt that the military events in the neighbouring region have had an impact on the negotiation process.

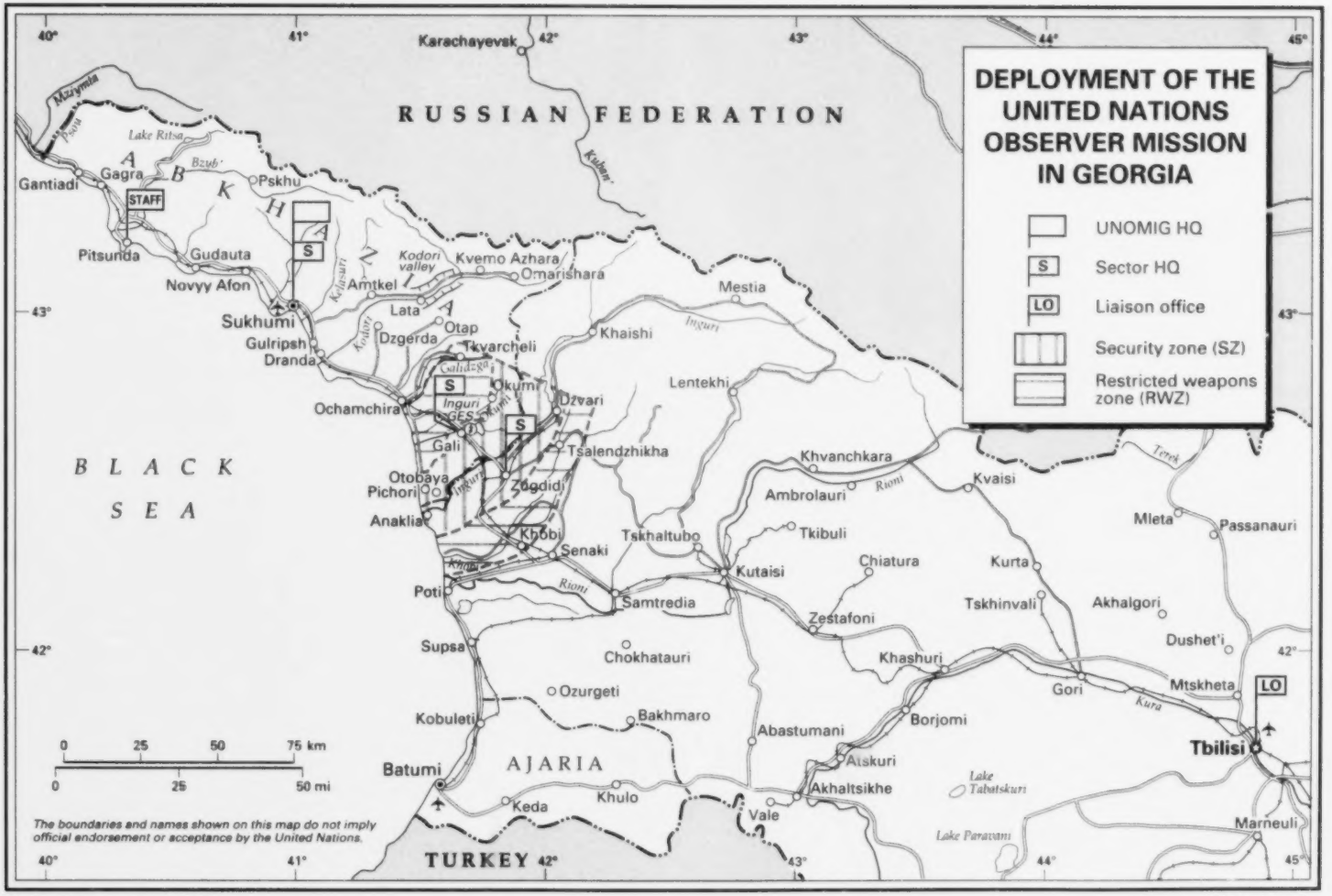
36. On the other hand, the continued stalemate on the question of the orderly return of refugees and displaced persons to Abkhazia is creating pressures which, if not eased significantly, could well result in explosive developments. On 10 February my Special Envoy wrote to the Abkhaz leader, Mr. Vladislav Ardzinba, and set out unequivocally the gravity and possible consequences of the looming situation. Continued lack of progress on the refugee question is not only likely to derail the process of political negotiation but could also set in motion a chain of events that would lead to the resumption of a bitter war between the two sides. Every effort will therefore continue to be made to obtain Abkhaz agreement to a timetable that would ensure the early return of a substantial number of persons to their homes by mid-1995, in particular in the Gali region.

37. In spite of the present generally unsatisfactory situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, especially as regards the refugees, it is my strong belief that the presence of UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force in the region has contributed greatly to preventing a resumption of hostilities and paved the way for continued political negotiations. It is hoped that the recent intensification of activities by UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force will improve the security situation in Abkhazia, thus contributing to conditions conducive to the safe return of refugees. However, the effect of such activities is bound to remain limited if they are not coupled with substantive progress in the quadripartite process. This, in turn, is linked with the pressing need to establish and maintain progress in the political negotiations. I remain confident that, with patience and perseverance, solutions can be found but it should be recognized that these two elements are not inexhaustible.

Annex

Composition of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

Member State	Military observers
Albania	1
Austria	4
Bangladesh	11
Czech Republic	5
Cuba	4
Denmark	6
Egypt	5
France	5
Germany	10
Greece	5
Hungary	7
Indonesia	6
Jordan	9
Pakistan	8
Poland	5
Republic of Korea	6
Russian Federation	3
Sweden	8
Switzerland	5
Turkey	5
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	10
United States of America	4
Uruguay	4
Total	136


DEPLOYMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA
UNOMIG HQ
Sector HQ
Liaison office
Security zone (SZ)
Restricted weapons zone (RWZ)
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
BLACK SEA
TURKEY
ABKHAZIA
AJARIA
Karachayevsk
Gantiadi
Gagra
Pskhu
Lake Ritsa
Pitsunda
Gudauta
Novyy Afon
Sukhumi
Gulripsh
Dranda
Ochamchira
Amtkel
Kodori valley
Kvemo Azhara
Omarishara
Lata
Otap
Dzgerda
Tkvarcheli
Okumi
Ozvari
Gali
Inguri
Otobaya
Pichori
Anaklia
Zugdidi
Khobi
Senaki
Poti
Supsa
Batumi
Keda
Khulo
Kobuleti
Ozurgeti
Chokhatauri
Bakhmaro
Samtredia
Tskhaltubo
Kutaisi
Mestia
Khaishi
Lentekhi
Tsalendzhikha
Khvanchkara
Ambrolauri
Tkibuli
Chiatura
Zestafoni
Abastumani
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Borjomi
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Tskhinvali
Akhalgori
Mtskheta
Tbilisi
Mleta
Passanauri
Dushet'i
Marneuli
Lake Tabatskuri
Lake Paravani
Rioni
Kura
Terek
0 25 50 75 km
0 25 50 mi
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Map No. 3837 Rev. 3 UNITED NATIONS
February 1996
Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section